

British Philatelic Bulletin

Stop Press

1995 Greetings stamps

The seventh issue of colourful Royal Mail Greetings stamps will be released on 21 March 1995 comprising 10 1st class stamps reproducing noted works from various art media. The stamps will be sold in a book, including 20 free Greetings labels, available from post offices, selected retail outlets, the British Philatelic Bureau and Post Office Counters philatelic outlets, price £2.50.

The stamps were designed by Newell & Sorrell, the company responsible for the 1993 and 1994 greetings sets. The works featured are: "Danse a la campagne", oil painting, by Pierre Renoir; "Troilus and Criseyde", ink and wash, by Peter Brookes; "The Kiss", sculpture, by Auguste Rodin; "Girls on the Town", acrylic painting, by Beryl Cook; "Jazz", screen print, by Andrew Mockett; "Pair of girls with joined hands performing a Kathak dance", book illustration, by Mughal Aurangzeb; "Alice Keppel with her daughter Violet", photograph, by Alice Hughes; "Children Playing", oil painting, by L S Lowry; "Circus Clowns", papier mâché, by Emily Firmin and Justin Mitchell; and "All the Love Poems of Shakespeare", engraving, by Eric Gill.

The stamps are printed in a pane of 10 (two rows of five horizontally) with 20 accompanying labels (five across and four deep), separated from the stamps by a gutter margin. The overall size of the finished book is 95 x 60mm. The labels bear messages such as "Good Luck", "Happy Birthday", "Love & Kisses", "Write Soon", "Thank You", and, of course, "Greetings".

Two of the artists will be well-known to collectors of British stamps. Eric Gill (1882-1940), one of the foremost typographers of his day, designed the frames for the George VI 1/2d to 6d definitives (SG 462/70). The National Postal Museum houses a number of Gill's unadopted postage stamp designs – mentioned by Douglas Muir in his article in this *Bulletin* and in his review of a biography of Gill here in May 1989.

Laurence Stephen Lowry (1887-1976) produced many paintings featuring life in industrial northern towns; his "Children coming out of School" was reproduced on the 1s 6d stamp in the 1967 British Paintings set (750). His paintings are particularly noted for their "match-stick men" figures.

Technical Details

Printers:	Walsall Security Printers Ltd
Process:	Offset lithography
Stamp size:	41 x 30mm
Perforation:	15 x 14 with elliptical perforation on vertical sides
Phosphor:	2 bands per stamp
Paper:	OBA (OBA= Optical Brightening Agent)
Gum:	PVA

First Day Facilities

Unstamped Royal Mail first day cover envelopes will be available from main post offices, the British Philatelic Bureau and Post Office Counters philatelic outlets around a week before 21 March, price 25p.

The Bureau will provide a first day cover service – collectors may order the Royal Mail cover bearing the stamps, cancelled with a pictorial "First Day of Issue" postmark of the Bureau or Lover, Wilts, price £3.36 (including VAT) to UK addresses, £2.86 to overseas addresses (no VAT). Orders for first day covers must be received at the Bureau by 21 March 1995.

Collectors may send their own stamped covers on the day of issue, for the Bureau or Lover cancels, to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Wexham Road, SLOUGH SL1 1AA (for Lover postmark). The outer envelope should be endorsed "FD955" (Bureau), or "FD956" (Lover).

First Day Posting Boxes will be provided at most main post offices for collectors who wish to post covers to receive the standard, non-pictorial "First Day of Issue" handstamps.

Presentation Pack and Stamp Cards

A "Greetings Pack" (No. G4) containing the pane of stamps and labels will be available from 21 March, price £2.85. Stamp cards, reproducing each of the 10 designs will be go on sale about one week before the stamps, price 25p each. Packs and stamp cards will be available from the Bureau, Post Office Counters philatelic outlets and main post offices.